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"We All Do Fade As A Leaf."

As a leaf we fade,
As a leaf we die—
Yet we are immortal,
You and I.
Our bodies mingle
With mold and clod;
Our souls are single—
They go to God.

Why should we travail
To understand?
'Tis better to trust
To an unseen hand.
Our hearts are wistful
By mold and clod;
But faith is blissful
And leads to God.

—WM. H. HAYNE.

The Primitive Church and Its Customs.

I stopped short last week in my writing about the Deaconess of the ancient church, because I had time to write no more then. The order continued in the church until about the middle of the fifth century, and in some places longer. In some of the Greek churches it continued until the twelfth century, while in others it was abandoned centuries before; and in the Latin or Western churches it was pretty generally abandoned before the commencement of the sixth century. The first council of Orange, held a. d. 441, forbids their ordinations; and the council of Epone, a. d. 517, wholly abrogated their consecration. In a. d. 553, the second council of Orleans issued a decree against further ordinations; and thus the tide was set against the order and it finally became extinct in nearly all of the churches, even though it came by apostolic institution and had the sanction of the New Testament scriptures in its favor. This is another evidence of how little respect is shown to the authority of the Scriptures by some men who pretend to be leaders in the Master's army, when they contain something that does not run parallel with the carnal tendency.

If the sisters would have been allowed to follow their desires in this matter, the order of deaconesses with its commendable and self-sacrificing work would yet be maintained.

I will here end with the superior clergy, in this section of the article, and leave other subjects pertaining thereto until some future time.

The inferior clergy consisted of five classes, sub-deacons, acolythists, exorcists, readers and door-keepers.

These were not in the apostolic church, although the Roman church claim they were; and as they were ministers of necessity rather than of design, we dismiss the whole subject with a few remarks.

The principal work the sub-deacons performed was, to prepare the sacred vessels used in communion services, and the utensils of the altar.

The Acolythist was an office peculiar to the Latin Church, and his duty was to light the candles of the church and provide the communion wine.

The office of exorcist was a sham office more than any other thing. Some men in the primitive church, had the power to

cast out devils through the operation of the Holy Spirit; but a created order of men designed for this purpose, was presuming to do in ceremony, what could only be done by the special exercise of divine power.

The Reader, of course, read, and read the scriptures. This officer was useful in distributing the labor of the church service; for where a reader was maintained, the bishop or elder was relieved of the labor of reading.

The Door-keepers of the primitive church served in about the same capacity that the modern usher does. In that age, the members did not mix with the world during services, and it was the door-keepers duty to assign to each person his proper place in the church. Even the catechumens, the converts under training, were assigned a place different in the church from that occupied by the faithful. Excommunicated members, were also prevented from sitting among the faithful during the services.

Singers are also classified with the inferior clergy in some theological writings. Another class known as Copiatæ or Fossarii, existed in several churches. Their work consisted in taking care of funerals and preparing for the proper burial of the dead.

In a few churches an order was maintained under the name of Parabolam, and the function of the office was waiting on the sick.

Catechists were also appointed in some churches, although this work was usually done by the bishop and elders; and often churches had men set apart to take charge of the revenues of the church, or act in the capacity that treasurers do now.

(To be Continued.)

"The world is not to be reformed or elevated into holiness. It has to be converted."—Hall.

I more than doubt whether, until our small services are sweet with divine affection, our great ones, if such we are capable of, will ever have the true Christian flavor about them.—Sir Gibbie.

Dost thou, O man, seek goodness, that thou mayest be rewarded for being good? O foolish man! Knowest thou not that goodness is the highest reward Heaven can give thee? The end of thy creation and redemption is that thou mayest become good—mayest be perfect even as God is perfect. Therefore thou shalt seek goodness, not for reward, but for its own sake.

Pride opposes itself to the observance of the divine law in two ways; either by brute resistance, which is the way of the rabble and its leader, denying or defying law altogether, or by formal compliance, which is the way of the Pharisee. Any law which we magnify and keep through pride is always the law of the letter; but that which we love and keep through humility is the law of the spirit. And the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

The Religious World.

Of the 473 additions to the Presbyterian church in Xenia, Ohio, 333 came in directly from the Sunday-school.

In the last twenty-five years the Methodists increased the value of their church property about \$60,000,000.

During the last twenty-five years sixty-five new Methodist chapels have been built at a cost of \$3,000,000, and the number of ministers has increased from 50 to 115.

The Romish Church in America finds its chief support in the foreign element that pours into our land from various foreign countries, chiefly Ireland and parts of Germany.

A Ningpo native pastor has recently gone to Nankin to undertake a sort of pioneer work. He has left a salary of nine dollars per month to accept one of six, because he thought that he was more needed at Nankin.

The native pastor at Lagos, West Africa, reports as the result of a recent spiritual revival in his large Yoruba congregation, that not less than 435 persons, young and old, "have professed to receive forgiveness and peace."

The first bridge ever built across the Jordan was opened to the public on January 26. From remotest times it has only been crossed by means of a ford. This bridge is near the mouth of the river, where it flows into the Dead Sea.

The Unitarian Chapel in Essex street, Strand, the first Union chapel in which Unitarian doctrines were distinctively preached, has at last been abandoned as a failure, and is to be turned into Unitarian offices, for which purpose subscriptions are being solicited.

The Berlin City Missions employ thirty agents, who spend most of their time in visiting the neglected or negligent poor. They distribute every Sunday 70,000 to 80,000 sermons among those who are prevented from going to church regularly, and an equal number of church papers find their way to the poorer quarters during the week. An asylum for discharged convicts is in course of erection.

A marked innovation is noted in West Chester, Pa., where it is stated that women are to be admitted as members of the vestry in the Protestant Episcopal church. This recognition is more remarkable than it would be in any other denomination, as the rule has been so stringent in that communion against women holding official positions. Possibly the difficulties attending the collection of a vestry in small places has wrought this change. Where the church is sometimes composed entirely of women they have had to go out into the highways and hedges and compel a vestryman to come in from some other denomination, or from the wicked world. It will also be remembered that Miss Sarah Smiley, the great

Quaker preacher, became only a Bible reader when she identified herself with the Episcopal Church.

It is stated that a committee of Jewish scholars will be appointed to publish an authoritative Anglo-Jewish version of the Old Testament.

The one hundredth anniversary of the first Episcopal ordination in this country was commemorated recently in the Church of the Holy Trinity, at Middletown, Conn. The first American prelate, Bishop Seabury, performed the ordination ceremony, the three candidates being Messrs. Philo Shelton, Ashbel Baldwin and Colin Ferguson.

Connecticut has passed a law against trashy literature, which has recently gone into effect. It imposes a fine of \$50 or less, and imprisonment for three months or less, or both at the discretion of the court, upon every person who shall sell, lend, give, or offer any book, magazine pamphlet or paper, devoted wholly or principally to the publication of criminal news, or pictures or stories of deeds of bloodshed, lust or crime.

A missionary of the Hermansburg Society, stationed at Bethany, South Africa, reports as members of his catechetical class two great-grandmothers, four grandmothers, and two grandfathers. Another missionary of the same society writes that a prominent Zulu of seventy years, a man who can speak three languages, and who has ever been a determined opponent of Christianity, has now submitted to the Gospel, and is receiving instruction.

The Foreign Missionary says, "In the Home for Chinese girls in San Francisco, are thirty-six waifs, mostly slaves, rescued from those who had purchased them for the worst of purposes. By their industry, in various forms, these girls support a Bible woman in Canton. As permanent and visible results of the blessed work of this Chinese home, there are now in and around San Francisco, seventeen young families, formed by the marriage of such rescued girls to Christian young men. Thus the blight and degradation of Chinese womanhood in California have given place to a settled and virtuous domestic order which of itself proclaims the Gospel with silent eloquence."

Feelings come and go like light troops following the victory of the present; but principles like troops of the line, are undisturbed and stand fast.—Richter.

Science has no faith-begetting power. Therefore a Christian should not rest upon scholastic wisdom, but on the power of God renewing the heart.—Heubner.

You keep the Sabbath in imitation of God's rest. Do, by all manner of means, if you like, and keep also the rest of the week in imitation of God's work.—Ruskin.

Half Work, Poor Pay.

It is half following Christ that is so difficult. A greater danger will stimulate to greater courage than a slight one. You can get up spirit enough to carry you through a grand, heroic deed easier than through a common-place one. Some people might be good Christians if they set out to be better than they are. They fail because they only hover about the virtues instead of plunging right in. They would make good martyrs but they are poor confessors. They would be faithful even unto death in a persecution; but they are not proof against sneers and grins. They can bear a heavy cross manfully but when it is only a little one they want to fling it down. Troubles to them are like the deafening roar of traffic in a city office, which goes on unceasingly, yet never disturbs the clerk at his desk: while if a boy began to whistle softly at his side he would become distracted at once. The greater is easier to bear than the less, because they make preparations in one case and not in the other. The whole is not so troublesome as the part. It is not easy to stop half-way. They say it is perfectly safe to carry a gun at half-lock, which is perfectly true only when you have a perfect gun. Half-measures are dangerous measures. To half-promise is not to promise. To half-finish is not to finish. Sins must be slain, but not wounded; and they are not dead if they have only one foot in the grave. Graces must bloom as well as bud: and virtues, like fruit, must be ripe, or they are not worth keeping.—Rev. C. T. PRICE.

Asking Grace in a Restaurant.

A clerk and his country father entered a restaurant Saturday evening and took seats at a table where sat a telegraph operator and a reporter. The old man bowed his head and was about to say grace when a waiter flew up, singing "I have beef-steak, codfish balls and bull-heads." Father and son gave their orders, the former again bowed his head. The young man turned the color of a blood-red beet, and touching his arm, exclaimed, in a low, nervous tone:

"Father, it isn't customary to do that in restaurants!"

"It's customary with me to return thanks to God wherever I am," said the old man.

For the third time he bowed his head, and the telegraph operator paused in the act of carving his beefsteak and bowed his head, and the journalist put back his fish-ball and bowed his head, and there wasn't a man who heard the short and simple prayer that didn't feel a profounder respect for the old farmer than if he had been the President of the United States.—SYRACUSE STANDARD.

Adversity is the trial of principle.—Fielding.